

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L USUN 5995

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: UN, AORG, UNIDO, UNEP

SUBJECT: DISCUSSION WITH SYG RE UN APPOINTMENTS

1. SYG WALDHEIM AKSED AMBASSADOR BENNETT TO MEET WITH HIM LATER MORNING DECEMBER 14 DURING WHICH HE DISCUSSED SEVERAL PENDING APPOINTMENTS IN UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM.

2. MOST URGENT AND MOST DIFFICULT APPOINTMENT INVOLVES APPOINTMENT OF NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FOR UNIDO. SYG FINDS HIMSELF UNDER HEAVY PRESSURES DUE CONFLICTING CLAIMS OF AF AND ARA GROUPS. LATIN AMERICANS HAD CONSIDERED POSITION PROMISED TO THEM AND PERUVIAN CANDADATE FERNANDINI'S NAME HAS BEEN UP LONGEST FOR THE POST. AS DEPARTMENT KNOWS, RESERVATIONS HAVE BEEN EXPRESSED BY MANY AND HE IS GENERALLY CONSIDERED WEAK CANNIDATE. AFRICAN GROUP HAS PROPOSED KHENE OF ALGERIA. SYG HAS MET WITH BOTH GROUPS AND FOUND THEM BOTH DETERMINED. AFRICANS INSIST THAT THEY MUST HAVE POST SINCE OAU SUMMIT DECREED IT AND AF GROUP HERE CANNOT GO BACK ON DECISIONS OF THE CHIEFS OF STATE. ON THE OTHER SIDE, LATIN AMERICAN HONOR OVER WHAT THEY BELEIVE TO BE TO HAVE BEEN A FORMER UNDERSTANDING IS HEAVILY ENGAGED. AFRICANS HAVE OFFERED TO PROMISE IN WRITING TO SUPPORT LATIN AMERICAN CANDIDATE FOR ANOTHER MAJOR UN POST.

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WITH ABOVE BACKGROUND IN MIND, AND MINDFUL THAT FERNANDINI

IS CONSIDERED WEAK, WALDHEIM HAS ABOUT MADE UP HIS MIND TO GRASP THE NETTLE AND APPOINT ALGERIAN KHENE.

3. IN ORDER TO HANDLE LATIN AMERICAN SENSIBILITIES, HE WOULD LIKE TO ARRANGE PACKAGE DEAL INVOLVING POST OF EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF UN ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRAM AS SUCCESSOR TO MAURICE STRONG, WHO IS READY TO LEAVE THAT POST. WALDHEIM WOULD LIKE TO OFFER UNEP POST TO PERUVIAN PERMREP PEREZ DE CUELLAR, UNIVERSALLY CONSIDERED ONE OF THE MOST SERIOUS AND CAPABLE MEMBERS OF THE UN DIPLOMATIC CORPS. HE TOLD BENNETT HE HAD DISCUSSED THE PROPOSITION WITH PEREZ DE CUELLAR (WHO IS READY TO LEAVE HIS OWN SERVICE DUE HIS WIFE'S HEALTH). ACCORDING TO WALDHEIM, PEREZ DE CUELLAR WAS ATTRACTED TO IDEA OF UNEP. (PEREZ LATER TELEPHONED BENNETT TO DISCUSS UNIDO IMPASSE. IN RESPONSE BENNETT'S QUESTION WHETHER PEREZ INTERESTED IN UNEP, LATTER REPLIED HE IN A MOST DELICATE POSITION IN VIEW HIS INSTRUCTIONS TO PRESS FERNANDINI CANDIDACY FOR UNIDO). WALDHEIM ASKED FOR U.S. REACTION IN VIEW OUR GREAT INTEREST IN UNEP. HE CONSIDERES PEREZ DE CUELLAR JUST THE RIGHT PERSON TO FOLLOW AN ACTIVIST LIKE STRONG WHO HAS PUT UNEP TOGETHER; PEREZ WOULD GIVE IT QUIET, SOLIDIFYING LEADERSHIP. WALDHEIM WOULD APPRECIATE HAVING USG VIEWS.

4. COMMENT: USUN AGREES WITH SYG' ASSESSMENT OF PEREZ DE CUELLAR, WHOM WE KNOW TO BE AN ABEL, PROFESSIONAL AND PROFOUNDLY WESTERN ORIENTED MAN. HE DECRIES MUCH OF PERU'S CURRENT THIRD WORLD ACTIVISM AND, AS DEPARTMENT IS AWARE, HAS DONE AN EXCELLENT JOB OF WALKING TIGHTROPE OF LOYALLY SUPPORTING HIS GOVERNMENT AND AT SAME TIME TEMPERING ITS INSTRUCTIONS TO EXTENT POSSIBLE IN GIVING US SUPPORT OF ABSTENTIONS ON ISSUES IMPORTANT TO US. CLOSE COMMENT.

5. WALDHEIM THEN MENTIONED THAT HE WAS CONSIDERING MAURICE STRONG FOR APPOINTMENT IN CONNECTION WITH NEW WORLD FOOD COUNCIL POST. HE SAID HE HAD NOT YET TALKED ABOUT IT WITH STRONG AND HIS DISCUSSION WITH BENNETT WAS THE FIRST TIME HE HAD MENTIONED THE IDEA TO ANYONE ELSE. WALDHEIM
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BELIEVES THAT STRONG WOULD BE ATTRACTED TO IDEA OF ORGANIZING IMPORTNAT NEW ACTIVITY AND THAT HIS CANADIAN CITIZENSHIP WOULD MAKE HIM ATTRACTIVE CANDIDATE. USUN WOULD BE GLAD TO HAVE DEPARTMENT'S VIEW FOR FUTURE USE WITH WALDHEIM.

6. BENNETT TOOK OCCASION TO CONVEY TO SYG THAT WE WOULD SUPPORT ROBERT GARDINER'S EXTENSION AS EXECUTIVE SECRETARY OF ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA. WALDHEIM RESPONDED THAT

GARDINER HAD NOW INDICATED HE WOULD LIKE TO STEP DOWN.
WALDHEIM SAID HE WAS FRANKLY GLAD TO HAVE THIS INDICATION
FROM GARDINER SINCE LATTER HAS A RATHER ALOOF
PERSONALITY AND THERE HAS BEEN SOME STAFF DISCONTENT.
HE IS CONSIDERING A NIGERIAN, DR. ADEDIJI, MINISTER OF
PLANNING, WHO HE SAYS SEEMS TO BE WELL QUALIFIED AND TO
FIT THE NEED.
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